

TOP SECRET

Approved For Release 2000/08/08 : CIA-RDP80-01065A000200060023-5

June 9, 1952

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MEMORANDUM

To:

From:

Subject: Advice to NSC Senior Staff about Berlin.

The following is a resume of the points which, with your concurrence, I have brought orally to the attention of the NSC Senior Staff in connection with paragraphs 23 and 25 of NSC 132, which call for use of force probably leading to world war rather than abandon Berlin if our position becomes untenable:

1. While it is impossible to predict the full psychological context of such a situation, present extreme reluctance of British and West European peoples to contemplate general war makes it likely that, under certain circumstances that are at least serious possibilities, it would be feasible to give up West Berlin with less net loss, psychologically, than would be involved in (a) being the first to use military force and probably (b) generalizing the action from local to global hostilities if the Soviets refused to back down.

2. Therefore, from the psychological point of view, it would seem wiser not to firm up policy now as proposed in the reference paragraphs, but rather to follow the draft produced by the original inter-agency working party, which merely said that the President would review the situation with the JCS and NSC and decide what to do. (That is, of course, what would probably happen anyway.)

3. The psychological repercussions around the world would be grave if, after initiating general war, we were shown to be seriously unprepared for it. (The NSRB member had said that it was silly to talk of general war in less than a year, because we simply could not fight one.)

4. The psychological point of view can of course be outweighed by other considerations. That is for the Senior Staff or its principals to decide.

In my judgment it would not be useful to press this matter further at present. It is highly speculative, and another effort to establish our case would only irritate people and distract attention from more urgent matters.

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